

**OLIVE VIEW-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER  
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE  
POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**NUMBER: 3257  
VERSION: 2**

**SUBJECT/TITLE:** PATIENT TRANSFER OUT

**POLICY:** Patients transferring out from OVMC

**PURPOSE:** To establish Olive View-UCLA Medical Center Department of Emergency Medicine policy and procedure relating to patient transfer between County and non-County facilities and ensure compliance with the Emergency Medicine Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA).

**DEPARTMENTS:** DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE (DEM)

**DEFINITIONS:** **Medical Screening Exam** means an examination provided by a physician and ancillary services within the capability of Olive View-UCLA emergency department to determine whether there is an emergency medical condition.

**Emergency Medical Condition** means a medical condition manifesting itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity (including severe pain) that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected to result in:

- a. Serious jeopardy to the health of the individual (or, with respect to a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or unborn child);
- b. Serious impairment to bodily functions; or
- c. Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part; or

With respect to a pregnant woman who is having contractions:

- d. That there is inadequate time to effect a safe transfer to another hospital before delivery; or the transfer may pose a threat to the health or safety of the woman or the unborn child.

**Stabilize** means, with respect to an emergency medical condition to provide such medical treatment of the condition as may be necessary to assure, within reasonable medical probability, that no material deterioration of the condition is likely to result or occur during the transfer of the individual from a facility; or, with respect to an emergency medical condition involving a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or unborn child.

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- PROCEDURE:**
1. All patients who seek medical care who present by any means including (but not limited to) walk-ins, by car or ambulance are provided a medical screening examination provided by a physician to determine if an emergency medical condition exists, regardless of their ability to pay.
  2. If a patient has an emergency medical condition, emergency services and care will be provided including evaluation, treatment and surgery necessary to stabilize or relieve the emergency medical condition within the capabilities of Olive View-UCLA Medical Center prior to transfer.
  3. When necessary, the examination and evaluation shall include consultation with a specialty physician qualified to give an opinion or to render treatment necessary to stabilize the patient. Such consultation may be obtained by telephone. However, when necessary, the consultation shall include examination and treatment of the patient in person. Patients shall not be transferred if services can be rendered at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center and beds/staffing are available, unless requested by the patient or their representative.
  4. Patients shall not be transferred to another facility without being stabilized (unless stabilization can only be accomplished at a center with a higher level of care).
  5. Stabilization of the patient prior to transfer must include, when indicated, but is not limited to:
    - a. Establishing and assuring an adequate airway and ventilation.
    - b. Initiating control of hemorrhage.
    - c. Stabilizing and splinting the sprain or fracture.
    - d. Establishing and maintaining adequate access routes for fluid administration.
    - e. Initiating adequate fluid and/or blood replacement.
    - f. Initiating antibiotics.
  6. The patient or patient's guardian shall be notified by the physician of the transfer and the reasons thereof. The patient acknowledgement of such notification, including risks, benefits, and alternatives associated with this transfer, should be reflected in an appropriate Patient Transfer Acknowledgment Form. (See attached).

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7. Patients to be transferred shall have appropriate personnel and equipment during transfer such that their condition will not reasonably be expected to deteriorate (unless being transferred for a higher level of care). Refer to the Department of Emergency Medicine policy “Medical Alert Center – Patient Transfer Out to Another County Facility” for additional details.
8. A patient with an emergency medical condition who can be stabilized at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center may be transferred prior to stabilization if the patient or legal guardian, after being fully informed of risks, benefits and alternatives to transfer, provides signed consent.
9. A patient with an emergency medical condition who cannot be stabilized within the capabilities of Olive View-UCLA Medical Center may be transferred to another facility for a higher level of care.
10. A patient with an emergency medical condition that can only be stabilized at a facility with a higher level of care who, after being informed of the risks, benefits and alternatives, refuses transfer, shall sign a “Refusal to Transfer” form (see attached).
11. Appropriate medical records and other pertinent records (e.g., laboratory results, ECG, x-ray) shall accompany the transferred patient.
12. A “Patient Summary Transfer Form” (see attached) indicating that all necessary approvals have been obtained, all necessary records have been copied and provided for the accepting facility and the patient is stable for transfer, shall be completed. The patient’s primary nurse and physician and the emergency department attending physician or charge nurse will review this form prior to transfer.
13. If the patient is to be transferred to another Los Angeles County facility, refer to the Department of Emergency Medicine policy “Medical Alert Center – Patient Transfer Out to Another County Facility” for specific procedures.
14. Hospitals are required to report the receipt of an inappropriate transfer in violation of EMTALA. The Inappropriate Transfer Form should be completed by the physician or registered nurse and submitted to the Department of Emergency Medicine administration as soon as possible after the event.

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References:	
Approved by: Gregory Moran (Chief Physician), Judith Maass (Chief Executive Officer), Patricia Evans (Clinical Social Work Chief I), Shannon Thyne (Chief Medical Officer)	Date: 04/20/2018
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